

PAGET'S HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA.*

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knowledge by the pound. We are satisfied, however, that these censors are mistaken at times even in regard to the public taste, and that the entertaining volumes, now before us, could not have failed to please American readers.

Mr. Paget relates his travels in Hungary in an easy, simple style, which demands for the author none of the interest that properly belongs to so remarkable a country and people. We feel curious to trace the effects of institutions which are so different, and yet with such strange analogies to our own. We leave the West, whose very peculiarities from sameness and long acquaintance have ceased to strike us, and we are brought within the sphere of that mysterious attraction, which the East always possesses for the imagination. To those travelling through these never changing countries, the past, the present and the future, seem brought nearer together; the strange costumes, the mixed races and tongues; the various modes and forms of social existence; the very earth and heavens recall us to the great age of national migrations, and open for us glimpses through the mist, that veils the fountain-heads of civilization. But such feelings are like the tumultuous emotions and vague thoughts that swell within us, at the first sight of the mountains or the ocean; we do not know them, till we have seen the East itself.

We shall at once see the importance of Hungary, if we consider its geographical position, as the connecting link between the East and West, on the south of Europe, like Poland on the north. The Danube, running from the borders of France to the Black Sea, must ever be one of the great channels of intercourse between Eastern and Western countries. Almost the earliest national migration, recorded in Europe, was made down this line by the Celts about the fourth century before Christ, in that great expedition, of which the sack of Rome, and the attack on Delphi, were offshoots. It was here, especially in Hungary, that the Romans began and continued with various fortunes, the protracted struggles with the Northern nations, which were to end in revolutionizing Europe. Indeed, so important was the line of the Danube considered to their defences, that Gibbon attributes their subsequent reverses, in great part, to Trajan's error, in pushing his military settlements beyond the banks of that river. Leaving its position out of view, its commercial importance still appears very great, when we consider that its course of 1710 miles, is nearly three times as long as the Rhine, and that it drains a basin four times as large. Well might Napoleon call it "the first river of Europe!" Its valley is formed on the South by the great chain of the Alps, which stretches across the head of the Adriatic, and becomes Mount Hæmus, or the Balkan, in Turkey. To the North, the Carpathians separate it from the extensive plateau, which connects the Baltic and

Euxine, where a rise in the ocean of only 1500 or 1600 feet would unite the seas, and submerge Northern Europe. About a third of the way down this valley, the mountain chains, after nearly meeting, recede on either side, to form a kind of amphitheatre, which is probably the basin of a former lake. This amphitheatre is the Kingdom of Hungary, and the Danube changes its impetuous course, and wanders more slowly, through fertile low grounds, to receive the tributary waters of the Waag, the Gran, the Theiss with its branches, the Bodroy, Koros and Maros, and the Temes from the North; and from the South, the Drave, fed by the Mur from Styria, and the Save, fed by the Kulpa, Unna, Verbas, Bosna and Drina. Swelled by these streams, it bursts from the Austrian Empire, through the iron gates of Orsova, where the mountains again meet, and flows majestically, like our own Mississippi, through a wide alluvial country.

The great fertility of the Hungarian plains attracted nearly all the migratory races of the first centuries; the elevated plateau before mentioned, to the north of the Carpathians, was a sort of level highway for nations, from which they could easily turn aside, and descend into more genial climates and to more productive soils, through the north-eastern corner of Hungary, where there seems to be a considerable depression of the mountain chains. All kinds of grain, the vine, tobacco, and other valuable plants flourish in this soil, and a country, which might be the store-house of Europe, is forcibly kept in semi-barbarism by the restrictive system, which Austria has adopted. The grain is fed away to cattle and swine, which are driven in great numbers to Italy, Germany, and even Paris. The large quantity of provisions that the Romans drew hence, was not the least reason for the tenacity with which they clung to this valuable province. The population of Hungary conforms to her geographical position, and fits her as a mediator, to infuse Western civilization into the Eastern countries of Europe. The Greek and Catholic churches everywhere co-exist; the dominant race of Magyars, (pronounced Mōd-yōrs.) is Finno-Uralian in its origin, and akin to the Tatars, while the lower orders belong to the Slavonians, the only autochthones of Europe, whom the most ancient lights in history show in the seats they now occupy.

These Slavonians are the most malleable of all people; with many fine points of native character, they have an unequalled aptness in learning from others. The whole East of Europe is peopled by this family, to which 100 out of the 230 millions of that continent are attached. A great destiny plainly awaits the nation, who shall give life to this immense population, and attach them by close ties to the European system of civilization. A simple analysis of Mr. Paget's book will prepare us to

consider how far the Hungarians are fitted for such a destiny, and we shall at the same time become acquainted with the institutions, which have aided them in guarding their freedom, alike from the storms of Turkish barbarism, and the crushing weight of Austrian despotism. Our extracts will show that his style is lively and simple, and his descriptions good, though our readers cannot enjoy the admirable vignettes that accompany them.

In June, 1835, Mr. Paget, an English gentleman, who seems to have spent much of his time in travelling, left Vienna with two companions for Hungary. He was warned by these Viennese, (for whom the late Emperor Francis wished, in answer to remonstrances against the censorship of the press, that they might be "*good, not learned*,") that Hungary contained neither inns, nor police; nowhere to sleep; nothing to eat; and robbers on every highway. Our travellers accordingly provided themselves with arms, which in a two years residence they had no opportunity of using, except against the hares and partridges! If our readers remember that Vienna is only a few hours journey from the frontier, they will be surprised that the Emperor's wish should be so perfectly fulfilled. So little can the citizens of the same Empire know of each other, when separated by those Chinese walls of custom-houses, by which Austria dismembers her own territory! Her motives are partly financial, but she also desires to dam out the tide of Hungarian freedom from the rest of her dominions.

Presburg is the first city we enter after leaving Austria a short distance. Though on the banks of the Danube, and with many handsome buildings, it has little to interest the mere sight-seer. The esplanade of the castle commands a magnificent view of a "vast wooded plain, through which the gigantic Danube spreads itself wild and uncontrolled. Sometimes dividing itself into several branches, nearly as wide as the parent stream, it forms large islands of several miles in extent; then collecting its scattered forces, it moves forward in one vast mass of irresistible power, till division again impairs its strength."—(*Vol. I. p. 5.*) A little eminence is here shown, called the *Königsberg*, to which the King of Hungary, in the very dress and crown of St. Stephen, rides up his charger, at his coronation, and "striking his sword to the four quarters of the world, swears to defend the country from enemies on every side." It is curious that a similar custom prevails among some Circassian tribes; it seems the fit inauguration of the chieftain of a clan of warriors, and an apt emblem of his duties. The unbounded hospitality of the Hungarians afforded our travellers every opportunity of observing society in all its forms. The description of a dinner-party in Presburg at the house of Herr Von P——, shows that America is

not the only country whose manners might excite the horror of our English kinsmen.

"As is the custom, the invitation was verbal, and the hour two o'clock. The drawing-room into which we were ushered was a spacious uncarpeted room, with a well polished floor, on which, I am sorry to say, I observed more than one of the guests very unceremoniously expectorate. Uncarpeted rooms, it may be remarked, though bare to the eye, are pleasant enough in warm climates; indeed, in some houses, where English fashions predominate, I have seen small stools of wood introduced to protect the pretty feet of their mistresses from the heat of the carpet. It is not an uncommon thing for a second rate French dandy to carry a little *brosse à moustaches* about him, and coolly to arrange those martial appendages in the street, or at the café; but I was a good deal surprised to see the exquisites of Presburg drawing well-proportioned hair brushes from their pockets, and performing those operations usually confined in England to the dressing-room, in the presence of a party of ladies, and within the sacred precincts of the drawing-room. But these were trifles compared to the solecisms committed at the dinner-table. One of the guests occupied a little spare time between the courses in scraping his nails with a table knife, talking at the same time to the lady next him, while his *vis-à-vis* was deliberately picking his teeth with a silver fork!

"The dinner was most profuse; and as is usual here, the dishes were carried round to every one in turn, the table being covered with the dessert. I can neither tell the number nor the quality of all the courses, for it was quite impossible to eat the half of them. Hungarian cookery is generally savory, but too greasy to be good. Some of the national dishes however are excellent; but the stranger rarely finds them except in the peasant's cottage. The Hungarians, like ourselves, run after bad foreign fashions to the neglect of the good wholesome dishes of their forefathers.

"We had abundance of Champagne and Bordeaux, and, as a rarity, some Hungarian wines. I say as a rarity, because in many houses not a glass of any thing but foreign wines can be obtained. Unfortunately, Hungarian wines are not only good but cheap, and that is enough to prove they cannot be fashionable. After dinner we adjourned to coffee, when pipes were introduced, without a word of remonstrance from the ladies, as if they were the common conclusion of a dinner-party: at five o'clock we all left. In more fashionable houses, (this was one of a rich country gentleman,) the dinner is rather later; the spitting confined to a sand dish set in the corner for that purpose; the cookery more decidedly French or German; the guests more stiff and correct, but, perhaps on that account less agreeable, and the smoking banished from the drawing-room to the sanctum of the host."

[*Vol. I, p. 12.*

An excursion to the Neusiedler Lake to the south of the Danube carries us into Prince Esterhazy's domain. The hot house at his palace of Eisenstadt contains seventy thousand exotics, and he has no less than three other palaces within a few miles. First in magnificence was that of Esterházy, though it is now neglected. Its marble

halls are decorated in the most gorgeous Italian style, with gold and painting, and its hospitalities required three hundred and sixty strangers' rooms. It was here that the great Haydn first rose to fame. He was an obscure member of the Prince's band, till his friend, the *Maestro* Friedberg, persuaded him to compose a symphony for his highness' birthday. The first allegro excited such admiration, that the Prince interrupted the orchestra to ask for the author. Friedberg dragged him, trembling with modesty, from the corner in which he was hid, and his fortune was made. For thirty years he acted as *maestro di capello* in the splendid opera at this palace. The neighboring castle of Forchtenstein belongs to the same magnate; it is a fine specimen of feudal grandeur in which are guarded the celebrated family jewels, (we have all heard of the coat of pearls Prince Esterhazy wore at George IV. coronation,) and complete armor for one regiment of foot and another of horse. Here too is a well, 170 yards deep, hollowed out of the solid rock by Turkish prisoners, and yet more curious is the family tree, which satisfactorily traces the descent from Adam, who is seen reclining at its root! Prince Esterhazy's estates are said to be as large as the Kingdom of Würtemberg; they contain 130 villages, 40 towns, and 34 castles. His winter flock of merinos numbers 250,000, guarded by 2,500 shepherds. But as a *spirituelle* in the neighborhood said to our travellers, "*Les Esterházy's font tout en grand: le feu Prince a doté deux cents maitresses, et pensionné cent enfans illégitimes!*"

Mr. Paget's next expedition from Presburg was up the valley of the Waag, a beautiful stream, whose romantic scenery and associations make it the Rhine of Hungary. It descends into the Danube between two offsets of the Carpathian chain, which now hem in the river with bold cliffs, crowned by feudal strongholds, with their tales of love and war, and then recede to form lovely valleys. At Freystadt, one of our first resting places, we find a breed of horses, which has been kept up, and indeed created, by several generations of the Erdödy family. It is of Neapolitan origin, and the horses range from 18 to 20 hands high, though they are said to be of little value, except for processions and royalty. The Hungarian nobles are now raising the English thoroughbred horse with zeal and success. They were introduced not many years since by some patriotic statesman of the liberal party, who felt the necessity of frequent gatherings of the gentry, in order to keep alive that spirit of nationality, which is essential to a country's independence. The races at Presburg and Pest offer such occasions of reunion, and have doubtless been of much political benefit to Hungary.

The usual mode of travelling is by post, or *Vorspann*, as it is called. The peasants are obliged

to furnish horses for a compensation fixed by the local administration of the country. In winter, when the teams have little to do, this chance of employment is eagerly sought, and it is rather a relief than oppression, except in busy seasons. The horses are so light and small, that it takes four to accomplish five miles an hour on a good road, and the harness is in keeping with the steeds. Made of cords, without a collar, and a single piece of string tied around the necks of the leaders instead of reins, it leaves the driver no resource but the whip, which he uses most plentifully.

The Slavack peasants are very numerous in this district. The race retreated to the mountains in the north and west, when their Magyar conquerors took possession of the plains. They are said to be industrious, but wont to spend the earnings of their labor in getting drunk and dancing to the bag-pipe. Their various costumes, especially those of the women, with white kerchiefs folded over the head and neck, and gay blue petticoats, turned up with a deep edge of bright red, contribute to enliven the scenery.

Sir Walter Scott's fame seems to have penetrated the remotest corners of the world. We remember that Walsh found one of his novels in Wullachia, and Mr. Paget meets with a well-thumbed copy of *Ivanhoe* in the hands of a Jew inn-keeper at Tyrhova. What a destiny awaits the great English author! His language is spoken through an empire vaster than the Roman, and on either side of the Atlantic, it is the only tongue to which the accents of true freedom are native.

The legal condition of the Hungarian Jew is bad, but, as in other parts of Europe, almost all the trade of the country is in his hands. He visits the interior districts, buys the produce, and furnishes the goods that are needed in exchange. The various capacities of agents, usurers, distillers and publicans are usually filled by Jews. We shall see by and by, that the Diet has made some effort to increase their franchises.

At Dementfalva, there is a beautiful ice grotto, to which the way descends through a limestone cavern.

"In the centre of this grotto, which is rather small, rises a column of beautifully clear ice, about seven feet high, on which the water falls, as it drops from the ceiling, and immediately freezes. The floor is one mass of thick ice. Still lower in the same direction is a much larger chamber, where an ice-pillar, of several feet in thickness, reaches from the roof to the floor. It is formed of small, irregularly rounded crystals of ice, of about the size of drops of water, which reflected most brilliantly the light of our torches as it fell on them. It is the presence of the ice in this cavern, and the various shapes it puts on, which imparts to Dementfalva its peculiar interest and beauty. We have already seen it forming the slender column and the stately pillar: a little further on, it presents in wonderful exactness the beautiful appear-

ance of a frozen waterfall ; in one place it hangs in such graceful and delicate folds that the statuary might borrow it as the *beau idéal* of his drapery, while in another, it mocks the elaborate fret-work of the Gothic roof."—[*Vol. I, p. 142.*

There are two or three other ice caverns in Hungary. In one, the ice forms the more abundantly as the summer heat is greater, and the inhabitants of Neusohl consume it through the whole season.

At Hradek, 180 miles from the Danube, the timber floating begins, and the Waag in its present state is of little other use. The woodman fells his timber in the winter, and collects it on the water's edge to be ready for the breaking of the ice. When that time arrives, he binds it with bark or thin branches into a raft, leaps upon it, and floats down the stream, which the Government has locked and dammed above Hradek. At the locks, he strikes his axe into the raft, and with this support rushes, on his slender craft, down the fall. At Hradek the wood is sorted, marked, and stored away till a purchaser can be found. In Hungary, wood is valuable enough to have created a regular system of forest management. The woods are divided into equal portions, usually about fifty, one of which is yearly cut down and replanted. Some parts of our own country, especially on the Atlantic sea-board, are so stripped of trees, and the noble virgin forests so destroyed, that it would become us to adopt a similar system. We would prefer, however, the English plan of judicious thinnings and replantings.

As the Diet was still in session at Mr. Paget's return from the Waag, he devotes a chapter to its constitution, and we will pause with him to inquire by what organization a nation, so hemmed in by Austria and Turkey, and almost beyond even the moral aid of European opinion, has succeeded in its freedom, and now bids fair to increase its constitutional liberties. When we remember that the Magyars appeared in Hungary as conquerors, and that no such amalgamation with their subjects ensued, as followed the Norman conquest of England, we shall not be surprised to find the entire power of government in the hands of this race, which constitutes not quite five-twelfths of the entire population. But the political constituency comprises only those Magyars, who are *noble*, (*ember*, in Hungarian,) a term nearly equivalent to the English *freeman*. As these nobles number half a million, and 125,000 are probably actual voters, we have a constituency of one in every seventy-five, while in democratic France it is only one in every one hundred and fifty. The nobles rest their privileges on the Bulla Aurea, which they wrested from their King in 1222, as the English Barons did Magna Charta from John in 1215. The two instruments are in many respects similar, and chiefly consist in guarantees of the simplest rights of personal liberty, and of quiet possession of property.

By the Bulla Aurea, the noble cannot be imprisoned before a legal conviction ; nor can he be called on to serve in foreign wars, except at the sovereign's expense. His property descends equally to all his sons, except in female fiefs, where the daughters are admitted into distribution ; but a singular provision entitles the youngest son to the dwelling-house, after the widow's death, in preference to any of his elder brethren. The noble alone can hold land ;* he is always a tenant *in capite* of the King, and cannot alienate. This restriction is attended by its usual disadvantages, and is evaded by sales under the form of mortgages, which, however, are always subject to the right of redemption by any member of the family at the original price, with a compensation for improvements by the mortgagee. Yet, perhaps, this bar on alienation has aided in keeping up the power and influence of the only class, which could have preserved the national independence to this day against the encroachments of the crown. A still more important privilege is the exemption from taxation, which the noble enjoys. It is his duty to serve in arms against foreign invasion, but Napoleon showed how easily these undisciplined levies could be dispersed. The nobles have since demanded to be trained as a National Guard, which the Government is too fearful to permit, and they stoutly refuse to pay taxes for the support of mercenaries, who might overthrow their liberties.

The Diet usually votes an honorarium at coronations, and extraordinary subsidies in time of war ; but it properly refuses to submit to any other taxation, so long as the crown exercises unlimited discretion in the expenditure of the revenue, and yet worse, keeps up an odious tariff of about 60 per cent. on imports and exports, though the Hungarians are, by their constitution, entitled to free trade upon payment of a 5 per cent. duty. The Diet also imposes a tax on peasants' property ; but we shall return to this subject in another place.

The nobles are divided into the titled and the untitled, and the latter into the gentry and the one-house nobles, who are little above the peasants in aught but their political franchises. The titled nobles are the magnates, and all have seats in the Upper Chamber, to which also belong the one Greek and thirty-four Catholic bishops, the Palatine, fourteen great officers of State, and fifty-two lords lieutenant of counties. The Palatine and the two guardians of the crown are selected by the Diet out of a list of four candidates, named by the King for each office. All the other members of the Upper Chamber are mere nominees of the Sovereign, except the magnates by birth, whose right to vote, (at least the right of all,) is a matter of some doubt. The functions of this Chamber are con-

* Towns form an exception to this rule ; they can hold in their corporate capacity, and their citizens may become their tenants.

fined to a simple vote on the bills of the Lower House; it can neither amend nor originate. The Hungarians justly regard it with jealousy, as the uniform supporter of Government against the people. Such it must remain, while the crown appoints so many of its members, and while the votes of so many magnates are disputed. But these magnates are usually very rich, and living more at Vienna than at home, they value the smiles of the court more than the good of the nation. Such a chamber is, at present, a great obstacle to reform in Hungary; it is a problem for her statesmen to solve whether it might not be made a useful conservative power by judicious changes, which should lessen the royal influence, expel, at all events, the sixteen bishops, whose sees have been in Turkey ever since the Ottoman arms narrowed the limits of the kingdom, and define the votes of the magnates.

The nation must look for aid to the Lower Chamber, which is composed of deputies from the counties; but before we explain its constitution, we must say a word of the *counties*, the true units of the Hungarian polity. St. Stephen, about the year 1000, divided the realm into fifty-two counties, each of which has a separate local administration, and is, in many regards, a little State in itself; nor can the central Government interfere in its affairs, or even execute the laws, except through its own officers. At their head is the *Fő Ispán*, or lord lieutenant, the representative and nominee of the King. He usually resides in the capitol, except on great occasions, and all his powers are wielded by the *Vice Ispán*, who, as well as all the other officers, is elected by the people every three years. He summons and presides over county meetings, corresponds with Government, and exercises all the functions of a chief executive officer, besides acting as chief judge of the county court. Paget says:

"There can be few positions in society more honorable, or more to be coveted, than that of Vice Ispán in Hungary. Chosen freely by the whole gentry of his county, possessed of immense power and influence, and exercising it amongst his own friends and neighbors, he enjoys all that to a healthy ambition can appear desirable. As a school for constitutional statesmen, I know of no office so good as this. It lays open a clear view of the wants and capabilities of the country, even to the minutest details; it places its occupant in the closest connection with his constituents, keeps him in constant remembrance of his dependence upon them, accustoms him to public speaking, and initiates him into that *ars agendi*—that tact in the management of affairs, which nothing but a long continuance in office can give, and which is almost as necessary in the government of a country, as commanding talent and just principles. It has accordingly been much sought after of late by young men of family, and I could name more than one hereditary magnate, whose greatest pride is his election to the office of Vice Ispán."—[*Vol. II, p. 56.*]

All the county officers receive a small salary, not as a remuneration, but to compensate them for the extraordinary expenses attending their stations. A meeting of the nobles and clergy of the county must be called at least four times a year, and these organized assemblies of the voters exercise not only the administrative functions which make the Virginia county courts alike valuable as local governments and political schools, but they go farther; they can open roads, cut canals, improve rivers, and debate the public questions which are under discussion in the Diet. Instructions to their delegate are regularly framed, and if he refuses to obey, he is recalled! As an instance of this, we will again quote from Mr. Paget.

"On our return to Pest, all the world was talking of a great county meeting which had just taken place; in which the member, Mr. Pecci, had been recalled by his constituents and dismissed from his place, for voting contrary to their instructions. The greatest efforts had been made by the Government party, at the head of which was the *Fő Ispán*, to defeat the Liberals; and, finding themselves in a minority, they proposed to adjourn the new election to another day: but, just at the critical moment, Count Károlyi György sprung upon the table, and calling out, "No time like the present!" was received with such a burst of acclamation as at once decided the question. * * * The new Liberal deputy, Mr. Fáy, was required, before receiving his authority, to swear in no way, "by speech or silence," to act contrary to the instructions of those who elected him; and it was determined that henceforward every deputy from that county should take the same oath."

[*Vol. II, p. 52.*]

The delegates send regular reports of their proceedings to their counties, which discuss their "grievances," and send orders "to the representatives to remedy them." We are told of a deputy, who got into so serious a difficulty with Government, that he thought it best to resign; but despite the utmost efforts of the administration, his constituents sanctioned his conduct by a reëlection. These county meetings can even correspond with foreign powers, as one of them has recently with the King of Bavaria. A yet more important power heightens their likeness to our State Governments; as "the acts of the Diet are sent down to the counties to be published, so also are the ordinances of the Monarch; but if, after due examination, these are found by the county meetings to be contrary to law, or in their tendency dangerous to liberty, they have the right to lay them, with all due honor, on the shelf, (*cum honore reponuntur*), and take no further notice of them: a right which they have frequently exercised, and which is in itself a sufficient guarantee against any kind of tyranny."—[*Vol. II, p. 60.*]

The Lower Chamber is an exact and equal representation of these counties, each having two dep-

uties,* with but one vote between them; so that Hungary is, in many regards, a *federation of almost sovereign counties*. Doubtless she owes her present freedom to this admirable system. The organized centres of resistance were too numerous for the crown to overcome; the right and practice of instruction secured representative fidelity, and made the Lower Chamber of the Diet, in fact, as it was in theory, a Congress of counties. The exercise of a similar right renders our Senate a Congress of ambassadors from the States; if we carefully guard the vantage ground of this and other States' Rights, we shall resist the unbridled tyranny of the mere numerical majority, as successfully, as Hungary has the less formidable despotism of kings. Nothing could be better fitted to awaken whatever individual talent or genius there may be in the people, than these county meetings, where public and local affairs are discussed, and the offices in their gift stimulate every generous ambition. Such a polity must have many of the chief advantages of the city democracies, which covered the face of ancient Greece, and ripened such a harvest of greatness, while the union, under one central government, affords the protection against foreign aggression and domestic violence, which the Greeks so sadly needed. In these days of centralization, it becomes us to consider whether a like organization of our counties might not have like effects, and aid us in resisting the consolidating tendencies of modern society. Railroads and magnetic telegraphs promise to annihilate time and space; is there not danger of their also destroying individuality of character and originality of thought? and in our eagerness to make all mankind think and feel alike, may we not run the risk of changing good members of the neighborhood and State, into indifferent citizens of the Union and world?

Mr. Paget's description of the elections at these county meetings, reminds us forcibly of similar scenes in England, and yet more in Ireland. They were formerly conducted by polls, but Government resorted to acclamation in the hope that the Fő Ispán might avail himself of the confusion of such a moment to declare its favorite candidate elected. This plan has been disappointed as it deserved; Government influence is lost in the enthusiasm of such a scene, and the few lords lieutenant, who dared to be partial, have been tossed out of the windows, and taught better manners. Besides the 104 deputies of the counties, the Lower Chamber has members, who, like the territorial delegates in our Congress, can speak, but have no right to vote. Such are the deputies of the free towns, and of the chapters of cathedrals. A magnate, who cannot for good cause attend the meeting of the Upper

Chamber, and the widows of magnates, may send deputies to the Lower; but they cannot even speak, far less vote. Their only function is to sit and cheer, and be lodged at the expense of the town in which the Diet meets! A Reform bill would, of course, sweep such gentry away. It seems, at first sight, rather unjust that the deputies of towns should not be allowed to vote, but when we learn that these boroughs are entirely subservient to the crown, we must applaud the Hungarian patriots for denying them a privilege, which would place the liberties of the country at the royal mercy. These towns are governed by a Common Council, which is self-elected, and whose members keep their offices for life, and by a Senate, which, in like manner, elects its own members out of the Council. Now as the deputy must be a Senator, and as first the Councilmen, and then the Senators, must each be elected out a list of three, named by the king, it follows that the deputy is little better than the nominee of the crown, just as the New York representative is virtually the nominee of a few managers, after the popular will has been filtrated through a series of caucuses. It is true that this royal prerogative of naming three candidates, amongst whom the election must be made, extends to the county officers; but a large constituency is not as easily managed as a small, and the Fő Ispán dares not disobey the wishes of the meetings,—“thanks,” as Mr. Paget says, “to the power of public opinion, and perhaps a little to those constitutional throwings out of windows to which we before alluded!” A town Senate cannot appropriate more than \$30 from their treasury, without the permission of the Monarch, and this string on their purse is found to be a powerful restraint on their will. It is probable that the Hungarian Liberals would gladly give votes to these deputies, if the crown would grant their constituent boroughs a free organization; such a change would increase the electoral body by 800,000 citizens.

Maria Theresa and her son, Joseph II., were distinguished for beginning in their dominions that work of centralization and equalization, to which the French Revolution afterwards gave such an impetus through all Europe. All their efforts in Hungary were accordingly directed to the subversion of its distinct nationality. Every thing was done to Germanise the people in language, habits, and customs. Diets were discontinued; county meetings and municipal privileges abolished. All was silently endured, till Joseph touched their superstitions by seizing the crown of St. Stephen, which is religiously guarded in the castle of Buda. This was to apply a lighted match to the ready train; the nation rose to a man, and its resistance was so obstinate, that the Monarch, who really meant well, and many of whose reforms would have been good, had they been legally accomplished, yielded, and declared, “that he would follow the

* These deputies are paid; neither can be absent without leave, and at least one must be present at every division.

path which the common wishes of the nation pointed out as best." But death prevented him from doing more than annulling all the labors of his life, except the decree for the toleration of Protestants. The Diet was called, (as by law, it should be, every three years,) and the sessions have since been regular, except during the troubled times of the wars of Napoleon. Mr. Paget's summary of the *Preferentialia*, or chief grievances of Hungary, as determined in two successive Diets, gives us an idea of the usurpations of the crown, and the real laws of the State. The chief are the demands that Dalmatia, Transylvania, Gallicia, and Lodomeria should be re-incorporated with Hungary; that the military frontiers should be placed under the command of the Palatine, and governed by Hungarian laws; that the duty on salt should be reduced; that the edicts of Government to officers of justice should be discontinued; that paper money should be abolished; and that the Hungarian language should be used in all official business. The last point has been since carried by the Diet. The Liberal party, which has sprung up, and now controls the Lower Chamber, cherishes above all things the spirit of nationality in the people, for no State can be free or great, whose citizens do not pay their first love and allegiance at home. The next desires of this party are for free trade, and an "improved code; the navigation of the Danube, and the improvement of internal communications; the increased freedom and education of the peasantry; the repeal of laws preventing the free purchase and sale of landed property; perfect equality of religions, and the freedom of the press." In the Diet of 1832, they proposed to give to the peasantry equal rights before the law. Eleven times did the bill pass the Lower Chamber, and as often was it rejected by the magnates. Did they not act under the influence of a Court, which prefers a divided people to a united nation for its subjects? Since Mr. Paget's book was published, the Diet of 1841 passed a law, greatly enlarging the franchises of the Jews, who number half a million, but with like intent, the Court refused its assent. The present Diet, (of 1844,) has passed this law again, as we learn from the public prints: it remains to be seen whether the Crown will persist in its veto.

After the Diet assembles, it waits upon the King to receive his propositions, which are debated and voted on. The deputies then bring forward whatever "grievances" they are ordered by their counties. Mr. Paget shall introduce our readers to a debate in the Lower Chamber, which is

"A long plain hall, traversed in nearly its whole length by two tables, covered with green baize, at which the deputies were seated with pens, ink and paper before them. At the upper end, there is a raised part occupied by the President, or Personal, the Vice-President and Secretary, and, behind these,

sit the judges of the royal table. The Chamber had rather a sombre appearance; the bare white-washed walls, and the black dresses of the members,—they were all in mourning for the Emperor—rendering it much more like our St. Stephen's, than the brilliant *Chambre des Députés* of our gayer neighbors. * * * I was much struck with the sonorous, emphatic, and singularly clear character of the language. From the number of words ending in consonants, particularly in *k*, every word is distinctly marked, even to the ear of one totally unacquainted with the language. I cannot characterize the Hungarian as either soft or musical, but it is strong, energetic and manly; the intonation with which it is uttered gives it in ordinary conversation a melancholy air, but when impassioned, nothing can exceed it in boldness. The subject of debate was a remonstrance proposed to be presented to the emperor against the illegal proceedings of the Government in the case of Baron Wesselényi. * * * Baron Wesselényi Miklós is a man of great talent and energy, and gifted with the most impassioned eloquence; he has distinguished himself chiefly as the leader of the opposition in Transylvania, and acquired the hatred of Government for the victory he gained over them in a chamber, more than half of which was nominated by themselves. On the sudden dissolution of the Transylvanian Diet, Wesselényi passed into Hungary, and appeared, when least expected, at a county meeting held in Szatmár, where the electors were met to frame instructions for their deputies, as to the vote they should give on the important question of granting equal rights before the law to the oppressed peasantry. The jealousy felt by the lowest of the nobles against the extension of any of those privileges to the peasants, by the enjoyment of which alone they are distinguished from them, had been fomented to the highest degree. Aware of the vast importance of this question to the future happiness of his country, Wesselényi used his utmost power to convince the electors how closely the true interests of peasant and noble are allied; how certainly the acquisition of just rights by the one would increase the wealth and power of the other; and more than all, how the union of both would consolidate the discordant interests by which Hungary is divided, into one strong and powerful nation. In the name of eight millions of their oppressed countrymen, he called on them for justice; he demanded that equal rights before the law should be extended to all, and that the burthens of the State should be borne by them equally with the peasants. In the course of his speech, he alluded to the policy so universally charged against the Austrian Government in Hungary, of exciting the nobles against the peasants, and the peasants against the nobles; of teaching each to regard the other as their natural enemies, in order, by division, to weaken both, and thus strengthen herself; and he stigmatized in strong terms so treacherous a policy, the ultimate object of which could only be the degradation and slavery of the whole country. His words were received with cheers. * * * Two months after this meeting, when Wesselényi had taken his seat as a Hungarian magnate, Government commenced an action against him for these words as treasonable, and put him upon trial for his life. From one end of the country to the other, a universal cry of shame arose

against so unprecedented an injustice. Remonstrances were prepared in every county; all business was interrupted at the Diet; Balogh, the member for Bárs, declared in his place, "that he should not consider himself guilty of any great crime, if he adopted the very words of Wesselényi;" with thoughtless precipitancy he was included in the prosecution; the whole Diet protested against such an invasion of the freedom of speech; the county of Bárs declared that Balogh had done no more than express the sentiments of his constituents, who took on themselves all the consequences of his speech; Government knew not which way to turn; private overtures were made to Wesselényi of immediate pardon if asked, and were indignantly rejected; the Chamber drew up a strong remonstrance. * * * This was the subject of debate during the sitting at which we were present. * * Kossúth, a young man of considerable promise, spoke next. He was content with two or three sentences, declaring strongly his opinion and the side on which he should vote. * * * Long speeches are by no means the fashion. * * * Kossúth has been most usefully employed during the Diet. Government, in spite of the law of Hungary; in spite of the protests of the Diet, forbids the publication of the debates, and maintains here as elsewhere in the Austrian dominions, a strict censorship. That the represented might have some idea as to how their representatives performed their duty, Kossúth undertook to report the debates, which are copied out by innumerable secretaries, and thus circulated in manuscript over the whole of Hungary.—[*Vol. I, p. 28.*

It appears that Wesselényi has since been condemned to an imprisonment, which Government has had the good sense to render very mild; Kossúth also has been tried for circulating the debates, and his judges were bribed to condemn him to a similar punishment. Struggles of this sort are continually arising; Government generally carries its point after an obstinate contest, but great excitement is created, and each seeming victory leaves the crown weaker than before, when the nation gathers strength, like *Antæus*, from its falls.

The Upper Chamber seems to be a sort of sleepy hollow, where the *denationalized* magnates usually speak Latin, and its few liberal members have well-nigh left it in despair. Count Széchenyi István, (in Hungarian, the Christian follows the sir name,) is one of the most distinguished of these patriots. Whether hopeless of good, or from other motives, he discontinued any active opposition in the Chamber of Magnates, and directed his efforts to highly important designs, which were less obnoxious to the Emperor. Such was the splendid chain bridge he built across the Danube, at Buda-Pest, instead of the bridge of boats which was broken up by the ice every winter. The *Casir-o*, which he established in Pest, on the plan of the English Clubs, but less exclusive, formed an attractive point of re-union for the Hungarian gentry, while its reading-room was designed to improve them in general information. It had already, at the time of Mr. Paget's visit, been the model of a hundred similar

institutions throughout Hungary and Transylvania, which have done much to bring the nobles together, and beget a stronger national and social feeling. With like intent, he formed a society for the cultivation of the Hungarian language and literature, with a capital of \$50,000, of which he subscribed one-fifth, a whole year's income. But Count Széchenyi has especially directed his attention to the development of the material resources of his country. He saw clearly its capacities for steam-navigation; it is watered in every direction by streams, that either are already navigable, or could be made so at a reasonable cost, and we imagine that the late improvements in steamboats would open many rivers, which were before thought impracticable. Count Széchenyi has secured an honorable immortality for his name, by introducing steamboats on the Danube. He first explored the way, in a common boat, from Pest to the Black Sea, and, satisfied that his design was feasible, he urged it in every form on the Government and the people, and at last conquered the thousand obstacles, which ignorance, prejudice, and fear raised in his path. In October, 1830, the first steamer plied between Semlin and Pest; the Count was appointed sole commissioner for the improvement of the Danube, and he has been no less indefatigable and successful in removing bars and blasting rocks, than he was in extirpating the moral obstructions which first impeded him. His most sanguine hopes are in a way to be fulfilled. We learn from later sources than Mr. Paget, that in 1837, the steamboats on the Danube, transported 47,000 passengers and 73,000 cwt. of merchandise; and in 1838 the numbers increased to 74,000 passengers and 320,000 cwt. of goods. They now run from Ratisbon to the Black Sea, and thence to Trebizond, Constantinople, Scio, Cyprus, and Syria.

Mr. Paget went in one of these boats from Presburg to Buda-Pest, which he describes as a very beautiful city. Pest is well built, on the plains, to the north of the river, while Buda, with its palace and castle, occupies the lofty cliffs to the south. In the suburbs of Pest are extensive farm-houses, where the nobles, who spend the winter in the city, keep their horses, cattle and provender. The Austrian Government has so blocked up the natural outlets for produce, that it sells for very little, and very uncertainly; of course every one prefers bringing his supplies from his own estate, though at a considerable distance, to buying; such are the blessings of the *home market*! The large plain of Rakos, near Pest, was the scene of the early Diets, where all the nobles, armed and mounted, met in a tumultuous assemblage. We shall not accompany our traveller to the fine buildings of Pest, or to the more ancient capital of Buda, where the Palatine and chief executive council still reside. The Diet has loudly demanded that its future sessions should be held in this city instead of Presburg, and Buda-

Pest promises to be a place of great commercial and political importance. We believe that a railroad now connects it with Vienna, which, with several others, has been the work of the last few years. The Balaton is a beautiful lake, about 80 miles to the south of Pest, on whose shores Mr. Paget visited the bathing-place of Füsed. The lake, though narrow, is fifty miles long, yet such is the state of internal trade, that not a sail whitened its waters.
